The Righteous ſav'd with Difficulty.

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Conſider'd in a

SERMON,

Occaſion'd by the DEATH of

Mr. ROBERT MUGERIDG,

Who died Jan. 13, 1759, in the 85th Year of his Age.

Preached at Horſly-down, Fair-ſtreet, Southwark, January 21ſt.

By SAMUEL FRY.

Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate. Luke xiii. 24.

Publiſhed at the unanimous Deſire of the Congregation and the Relations of the Deceaſed.

LONDON:

Printed for E. GARDENER, near the *Croſs-Keys, Grace-Church-Street*, and W. LEPARD, at the *Hand* and *Bible* in *Tooley-Street, Southwark.*

W: Musgrave.

[redacted]

1 *Pet.* iv. 18.

And if the Righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the Ungodly and Sinner appear?

MANY are the Cautions given us by the Holy Scriptures to the utmoſt Care and Diligence, that we may ſo improve our preſent Time, and uſe our Talents as thoſe who know that we are accountable to him that made us, and deſigned us for a State of Immortality. We are all ready to own, that no Buſineſs is of equal Importance to that of our Soul's Salvation, and therefore it

is a Duty incumbent upon us to work it out with Fear and Trembling, becauſe of the Uncertainty of Time, and the never-ending Circumſtances that muſt follow it; and becauſe of the many Interruptions we meet with in, and powerful Oppoſitions unto this neceſſary Work: Unto which may be added the Thoughts of the dreadful Diſappointment many will at laſt fall under with reſpect to their Hopes of Salvation.

God is of purer Eyes than to behold the leaſt Sin without perfect Abhorrence, and the beſt Men are in this World in a State of Imperfection; and therefore the great Governor of the World hath not only ſometimes ſeen fit to bring ſore Calamities on whole Nations and People in general for their Sins; but to make a Beginning with his own profeſſed People to correct Iniquity. So that, as the Apoſtle obſerves, Judgment may begin at the Houſe of God; yet with reſpect to the People of God, their Judgments will be over; and as they will be ſhort, they will alſo be light in Compariſon to thoſe Vials of Indignation which will be poured upon the wicked and ungodly World. And the Conſideration of God's Correction of his own Children, may be uſed as an Argument of the

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Certainty and dreadful Nature of the divine Wrath, which will come upon them, who are found disobedient to the Gospel; for if the Time comes, in which Judgment begins at the House of God; if it first begin at us (says the Apostle) *what shall the End be of them that obey not the Gospel?* This introduces the Words of the Text, *And if the Righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear?*

Some observe, that this whole Verse is a Citation of *Prov.* xi. 31. *Behold the Righteous shall be recompensed in the Earth, how much more the Wicked and the Sinner?* And that the *Seventy* translate exactly as the Apostle here quotes them.

The Word *scarcely* signifies Difficulty, and thus the Text may be rendered, if the Righteous be saved through Difficulty, *&c.* so the Word is used *Acts* xiv. 18. It is said, concerning *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *that scarcely* (that is, with Difficulty) *restrained they the People from doing Sacrifice unto them.* And *Acts* xxvii. 7, 8. the Word *scarce* is used to signify the great Difficulties the Apostle met with in sailing from one Place to another.

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The Salvation that is here ſpoken of, is not of a temporary Nature, a meer Deliverance from the Rage and Fury of their Perſecutors, to which thoſe Chriſtians were very much expoſed; for in this Senſe, many of thoſe righteous Ones were not ſaved at all, but fell a Sacrifice to the Hatred and Malice of their Enemies: And therefore it is neceſſary to underſtand the Words in a more general Light, even of the Difficulties with which good Men get to Heaven, thro' this dangerous, enſnaring World. And granting this, then, the latter Part of the Verſe muſt be deſigned by the Apoſtle to lead Sinners to conſider, where they can poſſibly hide themſelves from the Wrath to come, the threatened Judgments of a Sin-hating and Sinner-puniſhing God. Hence an eminent, and well-known * Writer paraphraſes it thus.—" And " if the Righteous himſelf be ſaved with Dif- " ficulty, how miſerable muſt the Ungodly " and Sinner be? Where ſhall he appear in " the Day of divine Vengeance, when all Na- " ture ſhall be, as it were, armed with Terror " for his Deſtruction, and when all impious " Tranſgreſſors ſhall be brought forth in his " awful Preſence, that his juſt, tho' dreadful " Sen-

* Dr. *Doderidg*'s Paraphraſe.

" Sentence of Condemnation may be execu-
" ted in its Rigour."

I ſhall, therefore, in a further Enlargement on this Part of holy Writ, endeavour,

(1.) To take ſome Notice of the Perſons thus differently characterized, Righteous, and Ungodly, and Sinner.

(2.) Conſider the Nature of the Salvation with which the Righteous are ſaved, and put you in Remembrance of ſome Difficulties belonging unto it.

(3.) Briefly obſerve the Interrogation in the Caſe of the Ungodly and Sinner, and ſhew you where he muſt and ſhall appear. And then make ſome Improvement in an Application.

(1.) Let us take ſome Notice of the Perſons thus differently characterized, Righteous, Ungodly, and Sinner.

The righteous Man is one that is juſt, upright, equitable, reaſonable, as the Word Righteous properly ſignifies. Not that ſuch a Man is abſolutely without Fault and perfect;

ſect; for there is no juſt Man upon Earth that doeth Good and ſinneth not. But many are ſtiled Righteous, and in Reality are ſo, in a comparative Senſe: Righteous when compared with the Profane, the Unbeliever, the Profligate, and willing Rebel againſt God. Righteous, compared with the Hypocrite, ſuch who pretend to be that, which, in Reality, they are not; who appear to be righteous before Men, but are not ſo in the Sight of the all-ſeeing and Heart-ſearching God. But they are righteous in Reality and Truth, that are ſo in Heart, and in the general Courſe of Life, labouring after the neareſt Conformity to the divine Will, the higheſt Attainments of Holineſs, Spirituality, and Heavenly-mindedneſs, walking as becometh Saints, with all Diligence and Care, making the Word of God their Rule, and the Spirit of God is regarded as their conſtant Guide and Help: Theſe are not without an humbling Senſe of their own Failures, which ſometimes occaſions great Uneaſineſs and Sorrow of Heart; but *this one Thing they do, forgetting the Things that are behind, they reach after that which is before*, ardently breathing after the State of perfect Holineſs in the World to come.

Or

Or more eſpecially, thoſe are righteous in the Account and Eſtimation of God, as intereſted in a better Righteouſneſs than their own. Chriſtians, as believing in *Chriſt*, and united to him by the Spirit of Faith, are made Partakers of the Benefits purchaſed for all the ſincere Followers of the *Lamb*. Among theſe is Juſtification by (as I conceive) the Righteouſneſs of the Redeemer; in whom the *Old Teſtament* Saints *were taught to believe for Righteouſneſs*. *Jer*. xxiii. 6. *In his Days* Judah *ſhall be ſaved, and* Iſrael *ſhall dwell ſafely, and this is the Name by which he ſhall be called, the* Lord *(or* Jehovah) *our Righteouſneſs*. By this, and many other Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, which contain Diſcoveries of the Saviour, we may be led to a rational Concluſion, that they had a diſtinct Notion of being juſtified before God, or declared righteous through him, who, by Virtue of the Promiſe, did juſtify all that did believe in him from the Beginning of the World, he being the Antetipe of their Offerings, and Sacrifices for Sin, and the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World. But we, under the *New Teſtament*, have an ample, or full Revelation of him: We are expreſsly told, that we are *juſtified by the Grace of God freely*,

through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii. 24. Blessed be God, that we are plainly assured, that his Son *Jesus* was *made a Sin-Offering for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* 2 Cor. v. 21. That *he is made of God, to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.* 1 Cor. i. 30. *That he is the End of the Law for Righteousness to all them that believe. And that we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace,* (the Father's Grace) *wherein he hath also abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence,* and who *makes us accepted in his own Beloved, and only begotten Son.* Eph. i. 6, 7, 8. The righteous Man is, in short, One that truly believes in *Christ*, receives him in all his Offices with Joy and Gladness, and devotes himself to his Service in all the Parts of known Duty, to the utmost of his Capacity; aiming at, and laying himself out for the Glory of God, the Interest of Christ, and the Good of All, especially the Houshold of Faith. And after all, he trusts in the infinite Mercy of God, and his dear Redeemer, for all that Good his Soul desires to enjoy, and which by the Gospel he is taught to hope for, respecting the future and eternal World. Now such a Man as this, we may be sure, is,

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by the Spirit of God, made a new Creature in *Christ Jesus*, for *the carnal Mind is Enmity against God*; it is not *subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, until renewed by Grace.

The Ungodly, in their Character, stand opposed to those I have described. They are unjust, iniquitous, unreasonable, sinful; stiled ungodly, as being not like God, but impious and wicked. Such are called ungodly Sinners, as being the willing Transgressors of the Law of God, Rebels against him, with whom he is angry every Day, who can by no Means claim a Right to the Benefit of Justification by the Righteousness of the Redeemer, 'till they are renewed in the Spirit of their Minds, and become new Creatures in *Christ Jesus*.

But I now proceed to consider

(2.) The Nature of the Salvation with which the Righteous are saved; and put you in Remembrance of some Things which may be accounted Difficulties belonging unto it. And I have said already, that it is not a temporary one; a being saved from the Hands of their Enemies. I now go on to observe, that

it is of a ſpiritual Nature, conſiſting in a Deliverance from Sin, the worſt, the procuring Cauſe of all other Evils. It may alſo be obſerved as a Salvation from Wrath, the Captivity of *Satan*, and the Priſon of *Hell*. Chriſtians are delivered from the Puniſhment due to Sin, as they are intereſted in the bloody Sacrifice and Death of Chriſt; and they are ſaved from the reigning Power and Dominion of Sin, by the Sanctifying Influences of the Holy Ghoſt. This therefore is a Salvation begun, and carried on in Time; the happy Effects of which will follow the ſincere Chriſtian into a future State of Felicity and Glory; ſo that, *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord; for they reſt from all Sin, and all Sorrow.* This Salvation is called eternal; becauſe the Happineſs of it ſhall never end, it is everlaſting Life: But who, in a frail and mortal Condition, can conceive the Happineſs and Glories of it? The Apoſtle ſaith, that *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things that God hath prepared for them that love him.* 1 Cor. ii. 9. It is Heaven, a Place (or rather a State) repreſented and deſcribed, in ſeveral Parts of Holy Scripture, by the Uſe of a Variety of Names, as *the Heaven of Heavens — the third Heavens — the New Jeruſa-*

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lem — *the heavenly Jeruſalem* — *the Tabernacle of God* — *the Holy of Holyeſt* — where we have Acceſs with our Prayers thro' the Blood of Chriſt — *the Building of God* — *the Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens* — the holy Hill of God — *the City of God* — our native Country — *our Father's Houſe* — *In this Houſe are many Manſions of Glory.* — Of this the Apoſtle *John* had a Viſion in the Iſle of *Patmos*, of which he gives a ſurprizing Account, *Rev.* Chap. xxi and xxii. This is the Place St. *Paul* beheld, when raviſhed, or tranſported into the *third Heavens.* Here is the bleſſed *Jeſus*, with the innumerable Company of Angels, and glorified Saints. Now they have a Viſion of him, and are in his immediate Preſence, where is a Fulneſs of Joy, and Rivers of Pleaſure. Now they find his Promiſe made good, in that he hath ſaid, *Where I am there ſhall alſo my Servant be.* Dying Saints, as *Stephen*, commit their departing Souls into the Hands of *Jeſus*, *Lord Jeſus*, (ſay they) *receive my Spirit.* And we have the ſtrongeſt Aſſurance, that their Prayers ſhall not only be heard, but their Souls taken into his Embraces, and lodged in his Boſom, there, While abſent from the Body, they ſhall live and wait for the Redemption of the earthly Part, in the all-riſing Day,

Day, when the whole Man will be happy and glorious for ever

For this Salvation takes in, and implies the Resurrection of the Body from the Power of Death and the Grave; and that, in the Likeness of the glorious Body of *Christ* himself. *Phil.* iii. 21.

But is it an easy Matter to attain to this State of Salvation and eternal Glory? No, surely; the Righteous themselves are saved thro' Difficulties.

And I shall now put you in Remembrance of some of those Difficulties that have been found in the Way of Salvation. The great Redeemer himself, the Author of this Salvation, as he is the only Mediator between God and Men, met with Difficulties in his Work. He was opposed by both Earth and Hell, Men and Devils, and this throughout the Whole of his holy and useful Life, and especially towards, and at the Close of it: And so will all his faithful Followers more or less. Who can take in a suitable Idea of his suffering State, when he (being in an Agony) sweat great Drops of Blood falling down to the Ground; or, when on the Cross, he cried out,

out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Here were Difficulties indeed, beyond all Comprehension. But in this Way it is, that the Righteous are saved and in no other. *Acts* iv. 12. Again; it may be observed, that the Holy Spirit, in his Office, with regard to this Salvation, meets with Difficulties. Indeed, this is speaking after the Manner of Men, for Nothing can be hard, or difficult to Omnipotence, or infinite Wisdom: But yet it is the Language of Holy Scripture, and consistent with the Manner of God's speaking to us thereby. Thus, *Gen.* vi. 3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with Man.* We read also of *quenching the Spirit*, and of *grieving the Spirit*, and of *resisting the Holy-Ghost*; all which intimates Opposition, and Difficulties it meets with in its Operations on the Minds of Men for their Salvation: In like Manner, God is said to be *tempted* and *grieved* by the Israelites *forty Years in the Wilderness*. And as to the Saints, they find the Way to Heaven attended with many trying Circumstances; so that Self-denial, Watchfulness, and Care are always necessary; that there must be a Striving to enter in at the strait Gate, and to walk in the narrow Way that leads to Life. In a Word, that the Christian Life is a real Warfare, in which he is called to

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engage the moſt powerful Enemies, ſome of whom are likewiſe exceeding politic and cunning: The World, the Fleſh, and the Devil.

The World is ſometimes a dangerous Enemy. It is indeed good in itſelf; but, when the Profits, Pleaſures, and Honors of it ſtand oppoſed to our Duty, Oh! how enſnaring is it! Theſe are Baits by which many Souls have been caught to their utter Ruin. How eaſily does a too great Attachment to theſe prevail on many to lay aſide all Pretences to a better World than the preſent; while many others ſwim with the Tide of Faſhion and Cuſtom, paying too little Regard unto the Truth, as, it is in *Jeſus*; and too many apoſtatize from the Profeſſion they have made; breaking through the moſt ſolemn Covenant, as if they were not accountable Beings to any but themſelves. And all this from a Regard to the World, either as to its Profits, Pleaſures, or Applauſes. But be it never ſo difficult, this Diſpoſition muſt be ſubdued, or we ſhall miſcarry at laſt, of receiving the End of our Faith, the Salvation of our Souls. For if we love not *God* and *Chriſt* above all; we do not, in Truth, acceptably love them at all;

all; and are unworthy of any Instance of Love from them.

Also the Flesh is an Enemy to us in this spiritual Warfare. *We wrestle against Flesh and Blood, striving against Sin.* Saints, as the Apostle observes, find *the Flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that they cannot do the Things that they would.* Gal. v. 17. However, there must be a mortifying the Deeds of the Body in order to the Attainment of everlasting Life. *Satan* also is a subtil, powerful, and malicious Enemy; he makes use of the foregoing Snares to catch unwary Souls, sometimes acting the Part of an Angel of Light, and sometimes that of a roaring Lion, and still, in one Form or other, going about seeking whom he may devour. And many of the faithful People of God have met with sore Persecution, *with Trials of cruel Mockings, and Scourgings, of Bonds, and Imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder; they wandered about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the World was not worthy,) they wandered in Desarts, and Mountains, and Caves of the Earth.* Heb. xi. 36, &c. following (in

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this Way) their great Captain, and Leader by the Croſs, to the Crown. Thus you ſee it is with Difficulty the Righteous are ſaved.

Before I proceed farther, let me obſerve, that notwithſtanding what has been ſuggeſted reſpecting the Difficulties met with in the Way to Heaven, yet there is no Foundation to take up hard Thoughts of the Doctrines, and Duties of the Chriſtian Life; for granting that this Warfare muſt be maintained, yet it is true ſtill, that the *Yoke of Chriſt is eaſy, and his Burthen light.* Matt. xi. 29. For the Troubles attending the Chriſtian, are chiefly of an external Nature, and belong to the Body and outward Things; ſo that the inner Man may be, and often is, at the ſame Time comforted; and ſometimes ſo much the more in Proportion, as the outward Afflictions abound. To this St. *Paul* and many ſincere and faithful Chriſtians have borne their Witneſs and Teſtimony. The Comforts of a Chriſtian are of a ſpecial and peculiar Nature, ſuch as it is impoſſible for this World, in all its Poſſeſſions and Enjoyments, to afford. *John* xiv. 27. *Peace I leave with you; my Peace give I unto you: Let not your Heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* And *John* xvi. 33. *Theſe Things have I ſpoken unto you, that in me ye*

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might have Peace. In the World ye shall have Trouble: But be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World. The Christian can *count it all Joy*, even *when he falls into divers Temptations*, or Trials, *knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience; and Patience, Experience; and Experience, Hope; and Hope maketh not ashamed*; because of *the Love of God shed abroad in the Heart thro' the Power of the Holy Ghost.* Rom. v. 3, 4, 5, 6. A Part of the Experience of such Souls is, that when they are weak, yet then they are strong; weak in themselves, but *strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might. Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus:* His *Grace is sufficient for them*; his *Strength is made perfect in the* Midst of *their Weakness.* In a Word, though *without* Christ *he can do Nothing*, yet he *can do all Things thro'* his *strengthening* of him; and believing that Saints are kept by the Power of God, thro' Faith unto Salvation; and that, as he has promised, he certainly will make all Things work together for good, *Rom.* viii. 28. these Christians can exultingly say, *who shall separate us from the Love of God? Shall Tribulation or Distress, or Persecution, or Nakedness, or Famine, or Peril, or Sword?* What tho' we are *killed all the Day long*, and are *accounted as Sheep for the Slaughter*, yet *in all these Things we are more than Conquerors thro'*

him that has loved us. Rom. viii. 35, 36, 37. And yet, for the Reasons that have been given, the Righteous may be said to be saved with Difficulties: *Scarcely saved.* But (3.) where *shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear?*

And here it must be noted, that this Way and Manner of speaking in the Scripture is very common; and often what we find expressed interrogatively implies a strong Affirmation. It cannot be supposed, that this Manner of speaking in the Text should at all suggest to us, that the Ungodly and Sinner (as the Consequence of their Sins) should not hereafter be anywhere found; that they should be reduced to a State of Non-existence for their Rebellion against God; nor does it intimate any Possibility of hiding themselves from his Eye, who beholds all Things at one View.

But this may denote the Terror of Mind, the Accusations of a guilty Conscience, and the dreadful Apprehensions of divine Wrath, which will one Day fill the Ungodly. Thus *Rev.* vi. 17. *The great Day of his Wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?* Sometimes an Interrogation is put to fasten Conviction

viction of Sin the more upon the Mind, and to vindicate the divine Conduct the more in his Punishment of it. Hence God said to *Cain*, *if thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted?* *Gen.* iv. 7. And in like Manner, our Lord says unto the hypocritical Pharisees, *O Generation of Vipers, how shall ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* Matt. xxiii. 33. So the Apostle, *Heb.* ii. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* And *where will the Ungodly and Sinner appear?* It is at once answered, that they will appear at the awful Bar of Judgment, that they may receive a righteous Sentence of Reward according to what they have done in a State of Trial and Probation for an Eternity. — *For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that we may receive according to Things done in the Body, whether it be good or bad.* 2 Cor. v. 10. *As it is appointed for Man once to dye, so after Death is the Judgment.* Heb. ix. 27. And *Acts* xvii. 31. *God hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given Assurance to all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead.* Thus *John* saw, in his Vision, *the Dead, both small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened, and the Dead judged according to their Works.*

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Rev. xx. 12. So that at this Tribunal, the Ungodly and Sinner muſt and ſhall appear.— And finally, they ſhall appear under a juſt Sentence of Condemnation as the Objects of divine Anger to all Eternity. Thus we ſee where the Ungodly and Sinner ſhall appear.

And from hence we may draw the following Reflections.

(1.) The Reaſonableneſs of thoſe many Scripture-Exhortations, that are ſo often given to ſtir us up to the greateſt Watchfulneſs, and Care in the important Concerns of our everlaſting Happineſs; ſhewing us, that we cannot begin to think of Heaven too ſoon, or be too ſolicitous to ſecure to ourſelves the beſt Evidence of our Intereſt in Chriſt, and a real Title to everlaſting Life. This is the beſt Improvement we can make of human Life, whether it be of a longer or ſhorter Duration. *Seek firſt*, therefore, *the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs: Remember your Creator in the Days of your Youth* — ye thoughtleſs and unconcerned about God and your Souls.

And You, who are already ſincerely engaged in this Work, *be ſtedfaſt and immoveable, always abounding therein.* (2.)

(2.) We are hereby minded of the Necessity of divine Strength, in order to our Performance of the Duties of the Christian Life. In the working out of our Salvation, we must own the Work is great, the Difficulties attending it are many, our own Abilities Nothing, and therefore we find a Necessity for God to *work in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure. John* xv. 5. *Phil.* ii. 13. Blessed be God, Strength is prepared for us, and promised unto us; but we must wait upon God in the Way he has appointed, that we may obtain it. *Isa.* xl. 29. xxx. 31. *He giveth Power to the Faint; and to them that have no Might, he increaseth Strength. Even the Youths shall faint and be weary, and the young Men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their Strength; they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.* Saints are kept by the Power of God to Salvation, but it is through Faith, in God's own Way. We must ask, that we may receive, seek, that we may find, and knock, that it may be opened unto us.

(3.) What has been said shews us the Foundation of the Joy and Praise of the Saints in

in their glorified State above. Now they ſee Something of the Power, and Efficacy of divine Grace, then, in the future World they diſcern much more of its real Worth and Excellence; when they will entertain a proper Idea of all the Way that Providence and Grace have led them, to bring them from a Pilgrimage State to a City of Habitation. With Raptures of Joy will they then ſing the Song of *Moſes*, the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, ſaying, *To him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and made us Kings and Prieſts to God his Father*, and our Father; *to him be Glory for ever and ever*. Let us read at Leiſure, *Rev.* i. 5, 6. and Chap. 5th, from the 9th Verſe to the End of the Chapter.

(4.) This alſo miniſters Terror to all impenitent, careleſs, diſobedient, and rebellious Creatures. How have they been warned of their Sin, and Danger, many a Time, but in vain! If any ſuch hear me now, let me addreſs them once more, in the Name of our Lord, in the Bowels of a Saviour, to return to him and live; that is, to uſe all the Means that becomes rational Creatures; peradventure God may give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth that they may be

be ſaved. And ye careleſs Daughters of *Zion*, why ſleep ye? Up and be doing, behold the *Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* For

(5.) We are taught by the Words of the Text, and by the Providence of God in the Death of our deceaſed Friend, and Brother, by whoſe Deſire this Part of Holy Scripture hath been now recommended to you; *taught*, I ſay, the Uncertainty of our preſent Time, and the Advantages gained by uſing and improving it well. *For if the Righteous are ſaved through many difficult Circumſtances*, what amazing Folly and Madneſs muſt it be to trifle in a Matter of ſuch Importance; when the final End of all Care, and Labour, in a State of Trial for Eternity may meet us this Day, yea, this very Hour; and what is then undone, muſt be ſo for ever? Behold, therefore, the Wiſdom and Advantage of minding the Concerns of the Soul and Eternity firſt, and principally; of being found of our Lord ſo doing, even as he hath directed us, *Bleſſed is that Servant.*

And ſuch an One, we may juſtly conclude, was our late worthy, and much reſpected Brother *Mugeridg*, by whoſe Death and par-

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ticular Desire this Subject is now recommended. And as it is expected, I should speak Something of him, in the present Solemnity; I shall only, with very great Brevity, and without the least Flattery or Partiality observe, that the good Report due to his Memory would fill up the Whole of such an Opportunity as this, properly to relate and improve.

For, *whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue and Things praise-worthy*, these were the Things thought of by him, and steadily pursued. And this Course of his was plainly manifested, as arising from, and supported by, a Principle of true Fear, and Love of God, and Regard to the Interest of the great Mediator, and Redeemer; together with the present and eternal Welfare of all to whom he stood related.—I find him devoted to Religion in the Time of Youth, and in Communion with this Church about threescore Years; always walking as became his Christian Profession, and a real Ornament unto it.

Be-

Between 40 and 50 Years ago, the Church, ſtanding in Neceſſity of ſome to ſerve in the Office of Deacons, our beloved Brother was fixed upon, as One furniſhed to that Service: And divers of you, my Brethren, are Witneſſes, with what Care, Diligence and Fidelity, he hath diſcharged that Office, to the End of his Life. I pray God to fill up his Place (in his own Time) with one who may faithfully follow his Example: An Example, worthy of Imitation; for of him it may be ſaid of a Truth, he laboured to keep a *Conſcience void of Offence, both towards God and towards Man.* Nor was he in this Reſpect only a Diſciple of the Bleſſed Jeſus, but alſo in the general, uſeful in his Place; always ready *to do good, and to communicate to the Supply of the Neceſſities of Others*, knowing that *with ſuch Sacrifices God is well-pleaſed.*

At the ſame Time, utterly abhorring the Thoughts of any Merit in any Thing done by him, ſo, as in the leaſt to deſerve the divine Favour: And relying alone upon the infinite Mercy of God, through the Merits of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for Acceptance and eternal Life. In this Way, he has paſſed the Time of his *ſojourning* many Years, through

this wilderneſs World, and obtained the Honour of being *an old Diſciple* of the Bleſſed Jeſus; diſcharging all the Duties of his Place and Station, in Love to God, and all that bear the Mark of the divine Image and Likeneſs; *following Peace with all Men, and Holineſs, without which None can ſee the Lord.* A Man of remarkable Humanity, Patience, and Reſignation to the Will of God. This ſhone forth in him conſpicuouſly in his laſt Hours; "if, ſays he, the Lord hath any more Work for me to do, may I be ſpared a little longer, if not, pray, that he would take me to himſelf; I am ſatisfied in his Diſpoſal of me and mine." And notwithſtanding the acute Pains by which the Body was preparing for the Duſt; yet his Submiſſion was unſhaken to the laſt; in this Frame (when called) he quietly fell aſleep in Jeſus, and is numbered amongſt the Bleſſed: His Work is done; his Reward will be glorious to all Eternity.

May God, the beſt Friend and Father, ſupport and comfort you the mourning Widow, the Children and near Relations of our deceaſed Brother! O! may you, his Offſpring, tread in his Steps, and be conſtant Followers of the Lamb of God, whither ſoever he goeth! that his repeated good Advice,

vice, and especially his eminent Example, may not be lost upon you! Be thankful that you have had the Honour and Comfort of such a Parent so long, and shew your Gratitude to God, by an inviolable Subjection to all his known Laws, to the Joy and Consolation of your good Mother, yet spared unto you.

And you, my Brethren, of this Congregation of Christians, and all of us present; let us attend to our Duty, and hear, and regard this Voice of Providence, which speaks unto us. Church Members, and Officers all die; let us humble ourselves under the mighty Hand of God, that he may fill up the many Breaches he hath made amongst us by the Death of our faithful Friends. — The Desire of our late Brother, we plainly see, in the Use of the Words of the Text, is to arouse the Secure and Careless, that if they are in good Earnest for Heaven, they may shew it by all possible Christian Diligence, abounding in the Work of the Lord our God. Let us then labour to live, so as that, when we come to die, we may chearfully commit our departing Spirits into the Hands of God, our heavenly Father, through the only Mediator, the

the Lord Jesus, knowing that he hath redeemed us.

Consider what hath been said, and may the divine Spirit make it effectual to Salvation!

F I N I S.